about 60,000 bonded labourers in Sireapuri, Gwalior and Thanthiya Districts of Madhya Pradesh as stone breaking workers belonging to Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, by when the steps are likely to be taken by Government to release and free them from the practice of bonded labour; and

(c) whether Government would take fresh and necessary measures to prohibit recruitment of bonded labour by quarry contractors and impose heavy penal action on the employers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) and (b) Under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, the responsibility for identification, release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers rests with the State Governments concerned. As per the reports, received from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, as on 31-3-1988, 7,486 bonded labourers had been identified in the State, of which 5,489 bonded labourers had been rehabilitated. Identification and rehabilitation of bonded labourers is a continuous process.

(c) Bonded labour system stands statutorily abolished with the proclamation of an ordinance on 25th October, 1975, later replaced by an Act. After the commencement of the Act, any person who compels any other person to render any bonded labour is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 3 years and also with fine which may extend to Rs. 2000.

Foreign assistance for Metro Transport in Madras

1021 SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state whether the Union Government propose to seek financial assistance from foreign Governments including the U.S.S.R. to complete the ongoing Metro project in the city of Madras early?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): No such proposal is under consideration at present.

Water supply scheme for Padmanabapuram Municipality Tamil Nadu

1022. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in Tamil Nadu there is only one Municipality, namely, Padmanabapuram of Kanyakumari District, which has no protected water supply scheme;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for pending the scheme for a long time; and

(c) whether steps would be taken to complete the scheme at an early date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) As per the information furnished by the Government of Tamil Nadu, Padmanabapuram and Colachal Municipalities in Kanyakumari District do not have protected water supply schemes.

(b) and (c) Investigations for water supply to Padmanabapuram already done were found unsuitable. New investigations have been taken up and a project report is under finalisation. Further action will be taken by the State Government after the project report is finalised.

Appointment in the Cooperative Societies

1023. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of society-wise appointment panels cleared by the selection committee constituted under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 and the rules made thereunder and for Multi State Societies enlisted in the Second Schedule of the said Act, since notification of the Rules on 16th September, 1985;

(b) whether the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies received requisition for the appointments to the post of